

January 28, 2011

To: Executive Board

Subject: **Transit Access Pass (TAP) Six Month Evaluation Summary**

Recommendation

Provide direction regarding Foothill Transit's ongoing involvement in the TAP Program.

Analysis

It has been six months since the Executive Board directed staff to track the list of TAP critical issued approved by the Executive Board. This will be the final status report as directed by the Executive Board updating the ten TAP critical items. Eight of the ten items have been completed and two are substantially complete. Staff will continue to work with Metro staff to fully resolve the two remaining items. The ten items were classified into four categories and are summarized below with their status:

Category	Status		Total
	Closed	Open	
1) Equipment/Maintenance/Reports	2	1	3
2) System Modifications	4	1	5
3) Regional Business Rules	1		1
4) Fare Media	1		1

Schedule A, Foothill Transit's "Status Report on TAP Critical Items" is attached and summarizes the progress, activity and status of each item.

Items 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 10 are closed and are included in the project status report below. Of the remaining two items, Items 3 and 9 staff will continue to work with Metro staff to resolve these outstanding issues.

EQUIPMENT/MAINTENANCE/REPORTS

1) Reconcile Farebox Revenues to the NextFare System

Originally Foothill Transit was unable to reconcile the cash collected to the NextFare Reports. It was determined that maintenance, lack of and farebox setups were at the heart of these discrepancies. Foothill Transit worked with the contractors to locate needed maintenance and furnished additional training on how to setup the fareboxes. A cashbox audit reconciling the actual cash collected to the NextFare reports was then completed. The results were within product specifications (plus or minus .3 percent). Foothill Transit has completed subsequent reviews/audits with results also within the

products specifications. This item was closed during August 2010

2) Security:

The NextFare software allowed bus operators to accept money (one dollar bills) by using an override function (Force \$1). The function would force the currency validator to accept whatever was placed in the currency validator as a one dollar bill. In the event it was not a one dollar bill the bus operator effectively created money. The NextFare system did not allow for a method to track the use of this function. A report was prepared allowing Foothill Transit to track the "Force \$1" usage thereby allowing Foothill Transit the ability to monitor the usage and adding accountability for its use. This item was closed during July 2010

3) Hummingbird Interface:

Foothill Transit sent a report to Metro detailing the needed modification to improve the functionality of the Hummingbird reports. The report detailed the filters and or options that are not applicable to Foothill Transit's operations. The report also requested definitions of various filters to determine if in fact they were applicable to Foothill Transit. A complete review was completed and a second letter was sent on August 8, 2010 clarifying the unneeded filters and requesting additional information on others. Item 3 remains open, however staff will continue to work with Metro staff to reach a satisfactory resolution.

SYSTEM MODIFICATIONS

4) Agency Separation:

Cubic has given Metro a rough order of magnitude estimate of \$150,000 as the cost for a solution. Metro is currently in discussions with Cubic and has indicated that this will likely be advanced as a regional issue and not an issue specific to Foothill Transit. It was felt that other agencies would require agency separation making this a regional item to be funded by the region. The item is substantially closed; Metro has indicated the agency separation system modification will be regionally funded.

5) Handheld Validators (HHVs):

Metro has loaned Foothill Transit five Mobile Phone Validators (MPV) for testing. Our Safety and Security team has tested the MOVs in the field resulting with satisfactory results. The Safety and Security officers were able to read TAP cards and determine their validity on each of our lines and types of service. The MPVs would indicate a green screen when a TAP card had the appropriate fare media and was tapped on the bus they were on. A red screen was an indication of invalid media or valid media, but the customer did not tap on the farebox. In the latter case the customers were directed to tap on the farebox. The MPVs allowed the Safety and Security office to determine

when the fare media was invalid or the customer had valid fare media and just forgot to tap. This item is closed.

6) Farebox Stalls:

During the initial testing of the farebox a system defect was discovered that caused the farebox to stall for 40 plus seconds. This occurred after completing a sequence of key strokes (entries) stopping all transactions. A software modification was received, tested by Foothill Transit and then subsequently pushed out to the entire fleet. However the software modification created a need for an additional report to monitor the use of the “Short Fare” function key. A report was made available through LA Dispatch to monitor the “Short Fare” usage. This item was closed during August 2010

7) Updates/Changes/Modifications to the System:

The NextFare system did not allow Foothill Transit the ability to make changes/modification to its fare structure. This was a departure from the current system where Foothill Transit was able make these change when needed and assure the changes were correct before rolling them out to the entire system. Metro established a process/procedure to allow changes/modification to be to an agency’s fare tables. These procedures allowed for timely changes/modifications that are easily monitored. The process includes approvals/authorization by both Metro and the agency accompanied with back-up documentation supporting the requested changes and the final results. This item is closed.

8) Notification of Software configuration changes:

This item is addressed with the completion of item 7 above. The process/procedures established in item 7 are to be followed for any and all changes whether initiated by Foothill Transit or the region. As stated previously all changes/modification will be approved by each effected agency and Metro and include back-up documentation supporting the requested changes and final results with appropriate approvals. This item is closed.

REGIONAL OPERATING RULES

9) Electronic TAP Transfers:

The Regional Operation rules have been completed and are scheduled to be presented to the all the General Managers at the next General Manager’s meeting (Municipal Operators and Metro). At this meeting the Regional TAP Operating Rules were to be adopted/ratified by the agencies that are committed to the regional TAP program. The next step to implement a regional TAP fare program will be for the agencies that adopted/ratified the Region Operating Rules to prepare regional policies to fully

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implement the TAP program. This next step will be required to fully implement a regional program. The regional policies will address the working relationship between committed agencies including the issuance and acceptance of transfers. Staff will continue to work with Metro and other agencies committed to the TAP program to establish the regional TAP policies. This item is open, but with the adoption/ratification of the Regional TAP Operating Rules the region is one step closer to a regional TAP program.

FARE MEDIA


10) Proof of Payment:

Metro has completed the purchase of Limited Use TAP cards which may be used for proof of payment on our Silver Streak service. Reinstatement of rear door boarding on Silver Streak requires “proof of payment” that can be verified by Foothill Transit’s Safety and Security team. This process could be accomplished by issuing cash customers a Limited Use TAP card containing their purchased fare transaction that can subsequently be reviewed by our Safety and Security team using MPVs. Metro believes all the needed parts to successfully implement “proof of payment” are available allowing Foothill Transit the option to implement rear door boarding if desired. In the event Foothill Transit would like to re-establish rear door boarding, it may be best after the Regional TAP Policies are adopted to reduce the impact on our customer. This item is closed.

Summary

The ten critical TAP items that were to be resolved over a six month period have been substantially completed. Eight of the items have been resolved and staff will continue to work with Metro to complete the two outstanding items. It is believed the agencies committed to TAP will be able to move forward to establish regional policy because the agencies NOT committed to TAP will no longer be part of the decision making.

Sincerely,



Richard Hasenohr
Director of Finance



Doran J. Barnes
Executive Director

Attachment

Foothill Transit List - Critical Operational Items

Foothill List of Operationally Critical Items Presented to Executive Board (Synthesized)	Translated to Measureable Objectives and Action Steps (Discussed by Both Agencies at Meeting (5-24-10))	Status Narrative	% Complete	Status Presented to Executive Board (insert date)
A. Equipment/Maintenance/Reports				
1. Reconcile Farebox Revenue to the NextFare System: The ability to reconcile/match monies collected by the fare collection system to the data generated by the fare collection system (Cubic NextFare system).	Reconcile farebox revenue to the Nextfare system by implementing the action items identified in the Cash Reconciliation plan agreed upon at the May 20, 2010 meeting of Foothill Transit and Metro.	6/25/10 Cash Audit Completed. Recommendations prepared and action items presented in Cash Reconciliation Plan. Items implemented in the reconciliation plan (maintenance items) and cash reconciliation has had positive results. Metro staff continues to work with Foothill staff monitoring reports on vault reconciliation.	100% Complete	6/25/2010
		Continue to give preventative maintenance training and report assistane on Cash/Vault Reconciliation process. Worked with Foothill Staff to identify the correct reports to use in the Cash/Vault reconciliation process.		7/30/2010
		Since the last Executive Board meeting Foothill Transit continued test counts. One test included counting the money in each cashbox and comparing the counted amounts to the NextFare reports. The results indicated the equipment is functioning well within the error limits established in the procurement documents		8/27/2010
2. Security: A method to monitor the use of the force functionality is not present and creates a security concern. Without a process and a readily available report to monitor the use of the force functionality it is impossible to control its use. A report detailing when this functionality is used should include time, operator ID number, bus number, route and location allowing Foothill Transit to monitor the force functionality. Foothill Transit considers this to be a system flaw that can have a major effect on the reconciliation process and security.	Monitor the use of the force \$1 functionality by creating and scheduling a report for daily retrieval that incorporates time, operator ID, bus number and route.		100% Complete	6/25/2010
		June report addressing all requirements included. Future requests for this report should be addressed to ladispatch@cubic.com. 72-hour turnaround.		7/30/2010
3. Hummingbird Report Interface: The report should not list options and/or variables that are not available/applicable to Foothill Transit. Also, several reports have data that is not easily discernable. While these reports may be helpful, without clear descriptions/column headings they are not. Metro will work with its contractors (ACS and or Cubic) to determine the ability to eliminate these options/variables from drop-down menus.	Remove options and or variables that are not available/applicable to Foothill Transit from the Hummingbird report generator by working with the contractor to ascertain the ability to "grey out" participants unused functions.		50% Complete	6/25/2010
				7/30/2010
		Since the last Executive Board Meeting Foothill Transit sent a report to Metro detailing the needed modification to improve the functionality of the Hummingbird reports. This included needed descriptions and the elimination of filters and options not applicable to Foothill Transit's operations. We have received a reply addressing most of the listed concerns. A complete review has not been completed		8/27/2010
		A reply to the previouly sent report was received and reviewed. After review was completed, a second letter was sent to clarify our desire to remove the unneeded filters and request clarification on others.		9/24/2010
		Item 3 remains open, however staff will continue to work with Metro staff to reach a satisfactory resolution.		11/15/2010
B. System Modifications/Enhancements				
4. Agency Separation: The elimination of agency separation in the fare collection system removes the ability of each of Foothill Transit's operations contractors to maintain their own data without being able to view and/or modify the other contractor's data.	Separate and restrict access to contractor data such as coach operator's information, coach information, and maintenance information by assisting Foothill in getting cost estimates for alternatives solutions.	Metro staff has contacted contractor regarding this issue. Vendor is preparing Rough Order of Magnitude proposal as to what would be required to effectuate this change.		6/25/2010
		Metro has received ROM from Cubic in the order of \$150,000. Discussion needs to proceed with Foothill staff on how to progress with this item.		7/30/2010

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4. Agency Separation: The elimination of agency separation in the fare collection system removes the ability of each of Foothill Transit's operations contractors to maintain their own data without being able to view and/or modify the other contractor's data.		Metro believes this item is completed based on delivering a solution, however has indicated they would continue to work with Foothill Transit towards a successful resolution. Foothill Transit will need to take the next step to work with the vendor, Cubic Transportation on moving forward with this alternative. At a recent meeting with Metro, it was noted other agencies may be interested in agency separation and cost sharing should be explored. Metro was also willing to assist with this issue. be willing to share in the costs. This item is closed provided Foothill Transit is willing to pay for the needed modifications.	50% - 100% Complete	8/27/2010
		The next step is for Foothill Transit to determine the specific elements of agency separation needed to allow our contractors to update facility-specific data. The cost related to this modification, estimated at \$150,000 could possibly be shared with other agencies or Metro should they find a need for agency separation.		9/24/2010
		Cubic has given Metro a rough order of magnitude estimate of \$150,000 as the cost for a solution. Metro is currently in discussions with Cubic and has indicated that this will be advanced as a regional issue and not an issue specific to Foothill Transit. The item is open pending documentation from Metro to that effect.		11/15/2010
5. Handheld Validators (HHVs): The implementation of the TAP card eliminated the visual inspection option requiring a card reader (HHV) to determine validation. The two HHVs contained in the original purchase (Foothill Transit wanted to purchase an additional five units) were no longer available. Because of the unavailability of the HHV, Metro loaned Foothill Transit six HHVs which unfortunately did not work on Foothill Transit's system causing the suspension of rear-door boarding and "proof of payment" on Silver Streak service just prior to TAP implementation.	Reinstate rear door boarding by deploying a Handheld fare inspection device. Metro will work with Foothill Transit on the deployment planning for the newly designed hand held validating devices.		100% Complete	6/25/2010
		Metro has confirmed that the mobile phone validator (MPV) is configurable for Foothill Transit operation. TAP operations staff will meet with Foothill and field test a unit. Should this solution be acceptable, Metro will provide Foothill with cost estimate for devices and data plan.		7/30/2010
		Miscommunication prevented Foothill Transit from securing MPVs for testing. Metro has furnished detailed instructions on the steps to be taken allowing Foothill Transit to receive MPVs for testing.		8/27/2010
		Metro has completed testing and has stated they will deliver the MPVs to Foothill Transit on September 24.		9/24/2010
		Metro has completed testing and has scheduled staff training on October 28, at which time the MPVs were distributed to Foothill Transit's Safety and Security team for testing. Our Safety and Security team has performed field testing resulting in satisfactory results. The Safety and Security team was able to verify the validity of pass transactions on TAP cards		11/12/2010
6. Farebox Stalls: During the testing of the farebox prior to installation in May 2009, a program defect was discovered that the farebox would stall for 40 seconds stopping all transactions after a certain combination of key strokes (entries). Metro and Cubic have indicated a software modification has been completed and is currently in testing by Metro. The software modification was recently loaded on the Foothill Transit test farebox on May 24, 2010 for testing.	Software Modification to be loaded onto Foothill Transit and tested to resolve Farebox stall issue.	"A software modification was received on May 24th (loaded onto Foothill Transit's test farebox for testing). Testing was initiated on June 8 resulting in the elimination of the stalling problem. Metro was notified on June 10th of the success in eliminating the stalling problem; however, Foothill requested more information regarding the functionality of the software. Metro provided this information on June 10th, and Foothill tested on June 14 and approved the software on June 14. However, Foothill responded on June 14 that they would like the new fare table loaded onto the test farebox, then have both the software and fare table pushed out to their fleet after testing the fare table. Metro is installing the new fare table on June 15 and will be requesting Foothill to test as soon as possible."	100% Complete	6/25/2010

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6a. Short Fare Key monitoring	The software up-date to resolve the farebox stalling issue Item 6 above created the need for a report to monitor the use of the "Short Key" function which loaded cash onto the TAP card allowing the TAP card to complete the fare payment process	Reported need for report to Executive Board	100% Complete	7/30/2010
		Metro has provided instructions on how the needed report in item 6, (the ability to monitor the usage of the "Short Key" function) above can be acquired through LA Dispatch, a help center for the fare collection system. Foothill will contact LA Dispatch to get delivery of this report.		8/27/2010
7. Update/Change/Modify Fare Tables: Foothill Transit currently does not have the ability to establish, test and implement changes in Foothill Transit business rules, e.g. fares, transfers, types of fare. This now requires a third party (ACS) to implement these changes. Metro will assume the responsibility to enhance the business rules for software and fare table changes and ensure the Regional Business Rules are approved/implemented for the Regional TAP program.	Ensure timely and accurate fare table changes and formal notification of software or configuration file changes by enhancing the procedures in Section 16.2 of the Business Rules document. It shall be Metro's responsibility to ensure the approval of the Operating Rules of TAP participants.	During the discussion and meeting on May 24, Metro and Foothill discussed the Regional design rules that had been set several years ago, having only TAP make changes to all Fare Tables. This is due to the Regionally shared database for all smart-card transactions (not cash data which is agency specific). At the meeting the objective reflected this understanding. (see objective language to left) To this end, the current procedure, established in Dec. 2009, (single form with 30 day notification for any changes.) has been enhanced. At the TAP Enabled Users Group Meeting held June 3, 2010, a new agency-specific sign-off Fare Table Change form that encompasses all of the lessons-learned since December 2009, has been created and was shown as an example at the TAP Enabled Users Group. The next step is to create separate forms specifically for each agency. These will be incorporated into the TAP Operating Rules, Section 16.2.	100% Complete	6/25/2010
		Two step process: 1) Fare Table Change Form has been enhanced and completed. 2) Vetting of the Operating Rules – Meeting (July 21) with all current TAP participants.		7/30/2010
		Last month the Los Angeles County Municipal Operators Agency (LACMOA) reviewed the Regional Operating Rules. Their comments were to be forwarded to Metro for the preparation of a redlined document, which was to be sent to the Regional TAP Enabled Users Group. The LACOMA comments were not received until the week of August 16 th . This required rescheduling the Regional TAP Enabled Users Group review meetings to early September. The redlined documents have been received and two meetings have been scheduled to review and comment on the redlined Regional Operating Rules.		8/27/2010
		The recent procedures implemented to complete the June fare changes has been expanded to include all fare table changes/modifications with defined procedures and timelines to assure requested changes have been completed. This will include required sign-offs and back-up documentation to track changes to the Nextfare system. A final sign-off will be required acknowledging the changes/modification were completed satisfactorily		9/24/2010
		An updated "Regional TAP Program and Service Center Operation Rules" document was distributed to TAP Agencies (Those operating TAP equipment) and other interested parties at a September 14 meeting. These agencies were directed to review the documents and furnish comments prior to October 22 to allow for the preparation of another draft document for review. Foothill has reviewed the document and furnished comments prior to the Oct 22nd deadline.		10/25/2010

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8. Notification of software configuration changes: A system needs to be established giving Foothill Transit the ability to review and approve regional software configuration changes that affect farebox functionality. Written documentation should be provided to Foothill Transit and signed off by senior management prior to implementation of any operational software changes. The Regional Business Rules will be modified to include formal alerts to all TAP agencies when any modification is initiated that could affect a TAP agency's operations. As stated previously, Metro will assure the Regional Business rules will be modified to address this concern and be adopted by TAP agencies.	Ensure timely and accurate fare table changes and formal notification of software or configuration file changes by enhancing the procedures in Section 16.2 of the Business Rules document. It shall be Metro's responsibility to ensure the approval of the Business Rules of TAP participants.	see #7 above	100% complete	6/25/2010
		see #7 above		7/30/2010
		see #7 above		8/27/2010
		see #7 above		9/24/2010
		see #7 above; In addition Foothill is monitoring the procedures currently being implemented by Metro/TAP to ensure fare table changes are implemented as directed with appropriate authorizations and finalized fare table schedules are produced for future fare table changes.		11/12/2010
C. Regional Business Rules				
9. Electronic TAP transfers: A process is needed to allow for a simplified method of loading transfers on TAP media which are accepted by all TAP agencies. Options include loading transfers on TAP cards, Limited Use Smart Card and printed transfers on media dispensed using a Ticket Reader Input Machine (TRiM) that can be visually inspected by all agencies accepting transfers. Metro will ensure the Regional Business Rules are adopted including enhancements detailing the acceptance of TAP Transfers.	Process is needed to allow for all agencies to accept transfers on TAP media by developing a deployment plan using Limited Use smart cards as a method of transfer and ensuring the approval of the Business Rules of TAP participants.	see #7 above	75% complete	6/25/2010
		see #7 above		7/30/2010
		see #7 above		8/27/2010
		Metro has indicated their desire and intent for the Regional TAP Operating Rules be adopted by the regional TAP agencies (agencies currently operating TAP fareboxes). While some movement has been made at a July LACOMA meeting, little if any has occurred since then. Modifications to the Regional TAP Operating Rules are needed to address regional transfer issuance and acceptance. A meeting has been scheduled September 30 th for the TAP agencies to review the proposed changes/modifications.		9/24/2010
		Transfer usage and acceptance between TAP agencies has been incorporated in the Regional TAP Program and Service Center Operating Rules. Please see item #7 for additional details		11/12/2010

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D. Fare Media 10. Proof of Payment: A process/procedure is needed to issue POP receipts. Options for the POP include loading POP on TAP cards, Limited Use Smart Card, and printed media dispensed using a Ticket Reader Input Machine (TRiM). Similarly, the use of paper tear-off transfers needs to be minimized to the greatest extent possible. Metro will jointly develop with Foothill Transit a deployment plan using Limited Use Smart Cards as a method of POP.	Proof of Payment needs to be issued for the cash customer on Limited Use (LU) Smart Card by jointly developing a deployment plan for use of Limited Use smart cards as a method of Proof of Payment for the cash customer.			6/25/2010
		Metro is going to Board of Directors on July 22, 2010 with recommendation for award of purchase of TAP fare media to include limited use smart cards.		7/30/2010
		Metro has completed the purchase of limited use TAP cards which may be used for proof of payment on our Silver Streak service. The use of limited use TAP cards would require successful testing of the Mobile Phone Validators (MPVs) indicated in item 5 above. Rear door boarding requires "proof of payment" that can be verified by our safety and security team. This process could be accomplished by issuing cash customers a limited use TAP card containing their purchased fare transaction that can subsequently be reviewed by our safety and security team using MPVs. Metro believes all the needed parts to successfully implement "proof of payment" are available and now only requires testing of the MPVs.	100% complete	8/27/2010
		Testing of the Mobile Phone Validators (AKA HHV) has been completed satisfactorily by our Safety and Security Team. With the completion of this testing all of the components necessary are available and functional for the implementation of "Proof of Payment".		9/24/2010

FOOTHILL TRANSIT

TRANSIT ACCESS PASS (TAP) – SIX MONTH REVIEW

Executive Board Meeting
January 28, 2011

TAP CRITICAL ITEMS

Item	Description	Action	Percent Complete
1	Reconcile Farebox Revenues to NextFare System	Results within product specification plus or minus 3 tenths of a percent.	100%
2	Security	Reports were created to track activity.	100%
3	HummingBird Interface	Staff is continuing to work with Metro to modify reports.	65%
4	Agency Separation	Metro has agreed to include as a regional funded item.	100%
5	Handheld Validators	Mobile Phone Validators (MPV) have been successfully tested.	100%

TAP CRITICAL ITEMS

Item	Description	Action	Percent Complete
6	Farebox Stalls	Software was updated and tested. Stall Eliminated.	100%
7	Updates/Changes/Modify Faretables	Forms/reports were created to track /authorize changes or modification.	100%
8	Notification of Software Configuration Changes	Forms/reports were created to track /authorize changes or modification.	100%
9	Electronic TAP Transfers	Regional policies have been developed, waiting for agency ratification.	65%
10	Proof of Payment	All needed functionality is available to implement.	100%

RECOMMENDATION

Provide direction regarding Foothill Transit's ongoing involvement in the TAP Program

QUESTIONS?????